

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

All claims currently pending and under consideration in the present application are shown below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer system for conditioning clinically related billing items, having a plurality of computer software components embodied thereon, the computer software components comprising:

~~an input interface configured to receive a preliminary billing item associated with a clinical event; and~~

a conditioning engine, the conditioning engine configured for receiving a preliminary billing item associated with a clinical event, communicating with the input interface to receive the preliminary billing item and analyzing, as a condition precedent to transmitting the billing item to a paying party, the preliminary billing item by comparison against a compliance template at least one regulatory guideline to determine compliance therewith, wherein the compliance template is configured in accordance with the preliminary billing item and comprises data fields that, when satisfied, qualify the preliminary billing item under at least one regulatory guideline, and determining whether the preliminary billing item complies with the at least one regulatory guideline, and upon determining that the billing item complies, dismissing restrictions from elements in the system that prevent the system from configuring the conditioning engine to transmit the preliminary billing item to the paying party.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A—The computer system according to claim 34,
wherein the conditioning engine ~~verifies~~ is further configured for verifying the existence of the ~~at~~
~~least one of~~ mandatory documentation by automatically scanning ancillary clinical data stores
~~and for the~~ affirming data elements at the ancillary clinical data stores and utilizing the affirming
data elements to satisfy the data fields of the compliance template by checking evidentiary
support for the at least one of mandatory documentation ~~and affirming data elements against a~~
~~compliance template~~, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least one of ~~a patient chart,~~
~~physicians orders, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record~~ that supports the preliminary
billing item, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a
radiology report.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A—The computer system according to claim 1,
wherein the conditioning engine ~~communicates~~ generates an exception that represents the
preliminary billing item or data related to the preliminary billing item and communicates the
exception to a holds queue for processing when the preliminary billing item is determined not to
comply with the at least one regulatory guideline.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A—The computer~~ system according to claim 6, wherein the preliminary billing item or the data related to the preliminary billing item is supplemented for satisfaction of the at least one regulatory guideline, while in the holds queue, upon the conditioning engine automatically retrieving clinical documentation from additional data stores.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A—The computer~~ system according to claim 7, wherein automatically retrieving comprises automatically conveying a notification to a user to conduct a manual search for additional clinical documentation.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A—The computer~~ system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one regulatory guideline is stored in a compliance database.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A—The computer~~ system according to claim 10, wherein the compliance database is updateable.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for conditioning clinically related billing items, comprising:

receiving a preliminary billing item associated with a clinical event;

analyzing, as a condition precedent to transmitting the preliminary billing item to a paying party, the preliminary billing item by comparison against at least one regulatory guideline to determine compliance therewith;

determining that the preliminary billing item complies with the at least one regulatory guideline upon performing a compliance process, wherein the compliance process comprises:

(a) interrogating a compliance template, which includes the at least one regulatory guideline as a data field, to determine criteria that qualifies the preliminary billing item under the at least one regulatory guideline;

(b) satisfying the criteria upon verifying the existence of mandatory documentation that supports the preliminary billing item; and transmitting a verified billing item ~~the compliant preliminary billing item~~ to the paying party, wherein the verified billing item includes the compliant billing item and the supporting mandatory documentation used to verify compliance with the compliance template.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 35, further comprising verifying the existence of the ~~at least one of~~ mandatory documentation and the affirming data elements by checking evidentiary support for the ~~at least one of~~ mandatory documentation and the affirming data elements against a compliance template.

16. (Original) A method according to claim 15, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least clinical documentation, the clinical documentation comprising at least one of a patient chart, physicians order, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a radiology report.

17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12, further comprising a step of communicating the preliminary billing item or data related to the preliminary billing item to a holds queue when the preliminary billing item is determined not to comply with the at least one regulatory guideline.

18. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, further comprising a step of ~~further~~ automatically reviewing the preliminary billing item or the data related to the preliminary billing item for satisfaction of the at least one regulatory guideline while in the holds queue.

19. (Original) A method according to claim 18, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an automated search for additional clinical documentation.

20. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 18, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an at least partly manual search for additional clinical documentation when the step of performing an automated search for additional clinical documentation does not resolve compliance.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12, wherein the at least one regulatory guideline is stored in a compliance database.

22. (Original) A method according to clam 21, wherein the compliance database is updateable.

23. (Currently Amended) One or more computer-readable storage media having computer-executable instructions embodied thereon that, when executed, perform a method for conditioning a clinically related billing item, the method comprising:

receiving a preliminary billing item associated with a clinical event;

analyzing, as a condition precedent to transmitting the billing item to a paying party, the preliminary billing item by comparison against at least one regulatory guideline to determine compliance therewith, wherein a compliance template is configured in accordance with the preliminary billing item and comprises data fields that, when satisfied, qualify the preliminary billing item being compliant, and wherein the at least one regulatory guideline comprises one of the data fields;

determining that the preliminary billing item complies with the at last one regulatory guideline; and

transmitting the compliant preliminary billing item to the paying party.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 36, further comprising verifying the existence of the at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements by checking evidentiary support for the at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements against a compliance template.

27. (Previously presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 26, wherein the evidentiary support comprises at least clinical documentation, the clinical documentation comprising at least one of a patient chart, physicians order, diagnostic codes, a history and physical record, a medication administration record, a set of progress notes, a treatment plan and a radiology report.

28. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 23, wherein the method further comprises a step of communicating the preliminary billing item or data related to the preliminary billing item to a holds queue when the preliminary billing item is determined not to comply with the at least one regulatory guideline.

29. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 28, wherein the method further comprises a step of further reviewing the preliminary billing item or the data related to the preliminary billing item for satisfaction of the at least one regulatory guideline while in the holds queue.

30. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 29, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an automated search for additional clinical documentation.

31. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 29, wherein the step of further reviewing comprises performing an at least partly manual search for additional clinical documentation.

32. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 23, wherein the at least one regulatory guideline is stored in a compliance database.

33. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 32, wherein the compliance database is updateable.

34. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The computer system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one regulatory guideline includes at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements.

35. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12, wherein the at least one regulatory guideline includes ~~at least one of~~ the mandatory documentation and affirming data elements.

36. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable storage media according to claim 23, wherein the at least one regulatory guideline includes at least one of mandatory documentation and affirming data elements.

37. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The computer system according to claim 1, further comprising a billing capture engine to generate the preliminary billing item, wherein generating comprises extracting potential billable items from a clinical data store.

38. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The computer system according to claim 1, wherein determining whether the preliminary billing item is complies with the at least one regulatory guideline comprises comparing the preliminary billing item against the compliance template, wherein the compliance template comprising necessary criteria for qualifying the preliminary billing item under the at least one regulatory guideline.